

difference—really make a difference—they can impose real costs on those who fund the terror weapons of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

We know where their return address is. It is over in Tehran.

I have been proud to stand with Israel for years, and I am proud to stand with Israel today. The United States needs to stand foursquare behind our ally. President Biden must remain strong against the growing voices within his own party that create false equivalence between terrorist aggressors and a responsible state defending itself.

Israel deserves an opportunity to restore deterrence and to impose costs on terrorists the international community has been unwilling or unable to impose. There is a saying that has been around for quite a while: If Hamas laid down its weapons tomorrow, there would be no more fighting; if Israel laid down their weapons, there would be no more Israel.

So let's leave no doubt where America stands.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MCCONNELL. On an entirely different matter, when the 117th Congress and President Biden were sworn in back in January, our Nation had already turned the corner in our battle with the coronavirus. New cases and deaths had already peaked and actually started to plummet. The vaccines, made available in record time thanks to Operation Warp Speed, had already started to roll out nationwide at a rate which the Biden administration inherited and sustained until April. The five bipartisan COVID packages that Congress passed in 2020 had the American economy packed with dry powder and primed for an epic comeback.

Economists across the spectrum agreed. One of President Obama's CEA chairmen said: "We have no historic parallel with anything like this level of excess saving." Larry Summers, another top Obama adviser and President Clinton's Treasury Secretary before that, said the bipartisan December package was already enough to elevate a measure of household income to "abnormally high levels, unheard of during an economic downturn." We were already adding back jobs.

But instead of tailoring another bill to build on this momentum, they pushed ahead with the \$2 trillion partisan plan that the far left wanted. Republicans predicted it would hurt our recovery if Washington kept taxing working people so the government could pay others a bonus to stay home. I stood here in February and quoted an expert who said:

In an expanding economy that is putting the virus behind it, paying people more in unemployment than they could receive from working is an act of substantial economic self-harm. It would keep workers on the sidelines, stop the unemployment rate from falling as rapidly as it otherwise would, and slow the overhaul recovery.

Well, we all knew what would happen, but Democrats insisted on continuing to pay people more not to work.

In April, as the President's policies took effect, we only added 266,000 jobs. That is nearly 800,000 under estimates, just as jobs openings soared to more than 8 million, the biggest number ever recorded. We are literally taxing the American workers who are back on the job for the sake of slowing down our economic recovery.

Instead of an agenda to reopen America, Democrats muscled through policies that would actually prolong parts of this crisis. And, of course, that is what happened. A record number of small businesses say they have open jobs they cannot fill.

Governors across America are having to take matters into their own hands and turn off these extra-generous benefits. In States like Arizona, Georgia, Montana, Ohio, and West Virginia, we have Governors having to clean up this mess, which at least one of their own Senators actually voted for.

The policies that we needed in March of 2020 are not the policies we need in May of 2021. That has been obvious to Republicans, to economists, and to the American people.

The sooner that my Democratic friends here in Washington can catch up, the better.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

ENDLESS FRONTIER ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1260, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 58, S. 1260, a bill to establish a new Directorate for Technology and Innovation in the National Science Foundation, to establish a regional technology hub program, to require a strategy and report on economic security, science, research, innovation, manufacturing, and job creation, to establish a critical supply chain resiliency program, and for other purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ISRAEL

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, just 4 short months ago, hopes were running high in the Middle East. ISIS was wiped off the map, the Iranian regime and its terrorist proxies were in retreat, and Israel was forging historic peace deals with its neighbors. All along the way, the United States was instrumental in this progress.

But in just a few months, the Biden administration has dashed those hopes with its policy of weakness and appeasement. The forces of terror are again on the march. Pillars of smoke and fire are rising from Tel Aviv and the holy city of Jerusalem. The assault on Israel by terrorist groups like Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad is the latest and most concrete evidence yet that the Middle East is spiraling toward chaos.

But instead of standing firm with Israel, the Biden administration's policy of endless accommodation is fanning the flames of conflict. The President should show strength. Instead, he is broadcasting indecision and weakness. Our greatest ally in the Middle East is under attack. Yet the Democratic Party refuses to say: We stand with Israel. The night sky over the Jewish State blazes with the starbursts of intercepted rockets, and the Biden administration only offers muted calls for restraint.

Where are the righteous denunciations of the terrorists responsible for these repeated, premeditated, and unprovoked attacks? Where are the statements of solidarity with Israel? Please. From this administration and from this Democratic Party, we can't even get the President's spokeswoman to say that the United States would help resupply munitions for Iron Dome, Israel's lifesaving missile defense system.

So this afternoon, let me provide a little clarity that the President and his party appear incapable or unwilling to articulate. The fault for the death and destruction in the streets of Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Gaza, and the West Bank lies not with the Israeli Government, much less with the Israeli people. The belligerents in this conflict aren't morally equivalent, the way it is often presented in supposedly enlightened circles. Put simply, there are good guys, and there are bad guys. Israel seeks peace. Terror groups seek death and destruction. Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad are not legitimate state actors. They don't speak for the Palestinian people and don't truly care about them.

These groups are terrorist organizations run by evil men who commit evil acts in pursuit of the evil dreams of an evil ideology. They purposely fire waves of unguided rockets at civilian targets, while they protect themselves from reprisal using babies, hospitals, schools, and dupes in the media as shields—what cowards, attacking innocent civilians while they hide behind women.